

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 370 884

SO 024 089

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TITLE A Focus on Lifespace Awareness for Effective 21st Century Living in the Global Community.
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PUB DATE Aug 91
NOTE 35p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Citizenship Education; Elementary Secondary Education; *Futures (of Society); *Global Approach; Learning Activities; Skill Development; Social Studies; Student Educational Objectives; Teaching Methods
IDENTIFIERS *Global Education; *Twentieth Century

ABSTRACT

This document suggests that efforts must be made, within the context of social studies curricula, to help children and youth perceive and interact with distant phenomena, either real or simulated interaction, so that they begin to understand the complexity and importance of the total global lifespace environment upon them both singularly and collectively. Each person is a citizen of family, neighborhood, community, regional, state, national, and an international collection of diverse social and cultural groups. In order to successfully assume the mantle of citizenship responsibility at each of these levels, individuals must demonstrate and understanding of : (1) contemporary conflicts, issues, problems, and situations that have a direct impact upon our daily lives; (2) personalities and groups or organizations that impact our lives and effect our well-being; (3) cultural, economic, political, and social conditions that influence the quality of life; (4) historical events, movements, and courses of action that impact contemporary life; and (5) diverse points of view, opinions, and position statements regarding conflicts, issues, problems, and situations. This document lists approaches and methods that can be used in the classroom and at field based sites to affect attitudinal, behavioral, intellectual, perceptual, and citizenship skills development of students. Charts and diagrams illustrate many of the concepts. (DK)

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A FOCUS ON LIFESPACE AWARENESS FOR EFFECTIVE
21ST CENTURY LIVING IN THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY



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August 1991



Founded in 1981, GLOBAL HORIZONS is an educational collaborative for the design, delivery, and evaluation of K-12 instructional programs as well as critical thinking/decision making skills development modeling in global education, and international environmental education.

Clearinghouse activities include:

- publication of a periodic newsletter,
GlobeScope;

- dissemination of relevant literature
in the field;

- original works published by the ERIC
system and in national periodicals;

- national conference paper presentations;

- teacher inservice education 'how to do it'
and informational workshops;

- development of audiovisual and print
instructional materials for classroom
use and field-based studies;

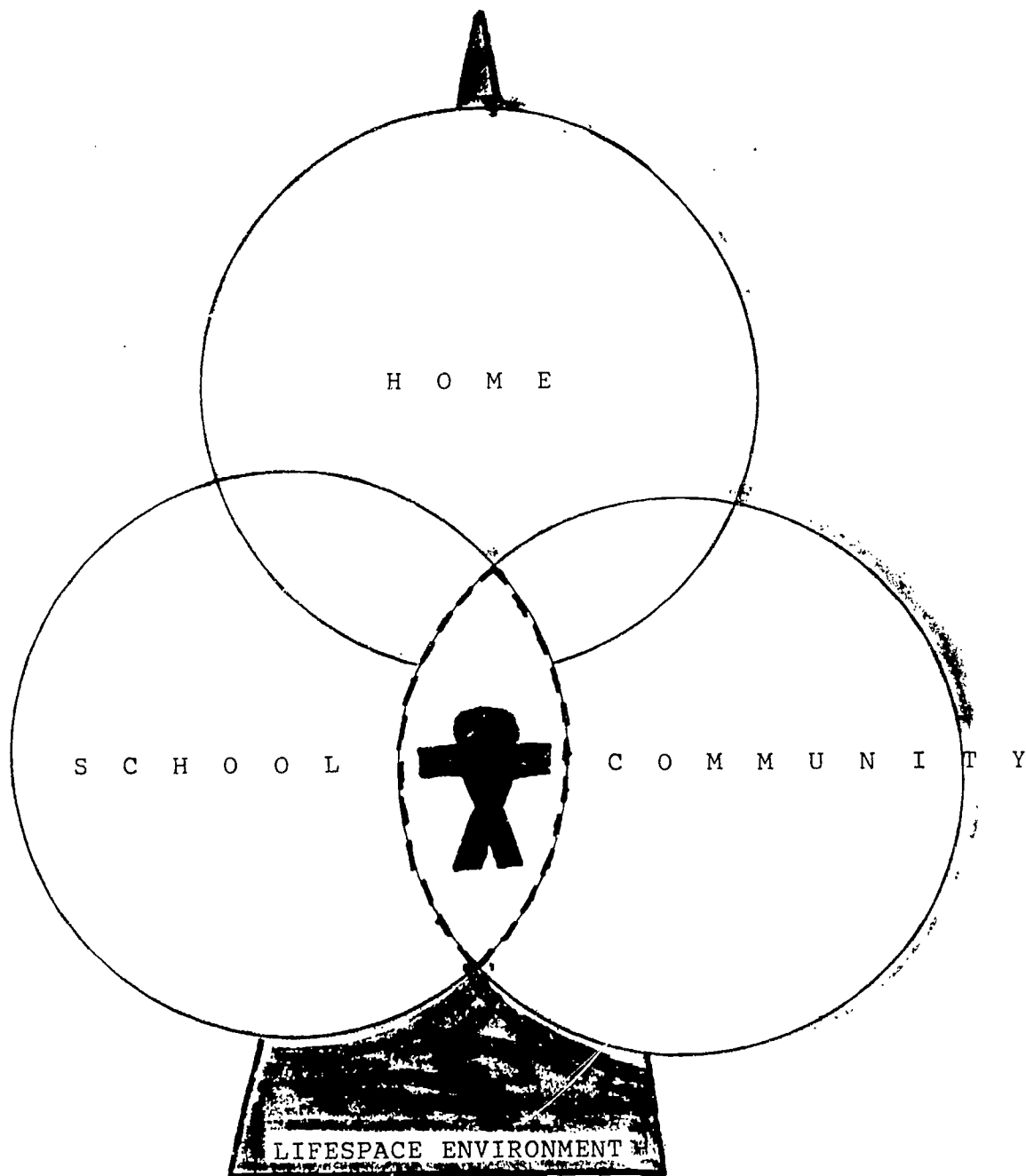
- the Humans/Environment Learning Program
for continuous, integrated, and sequential
instruction;

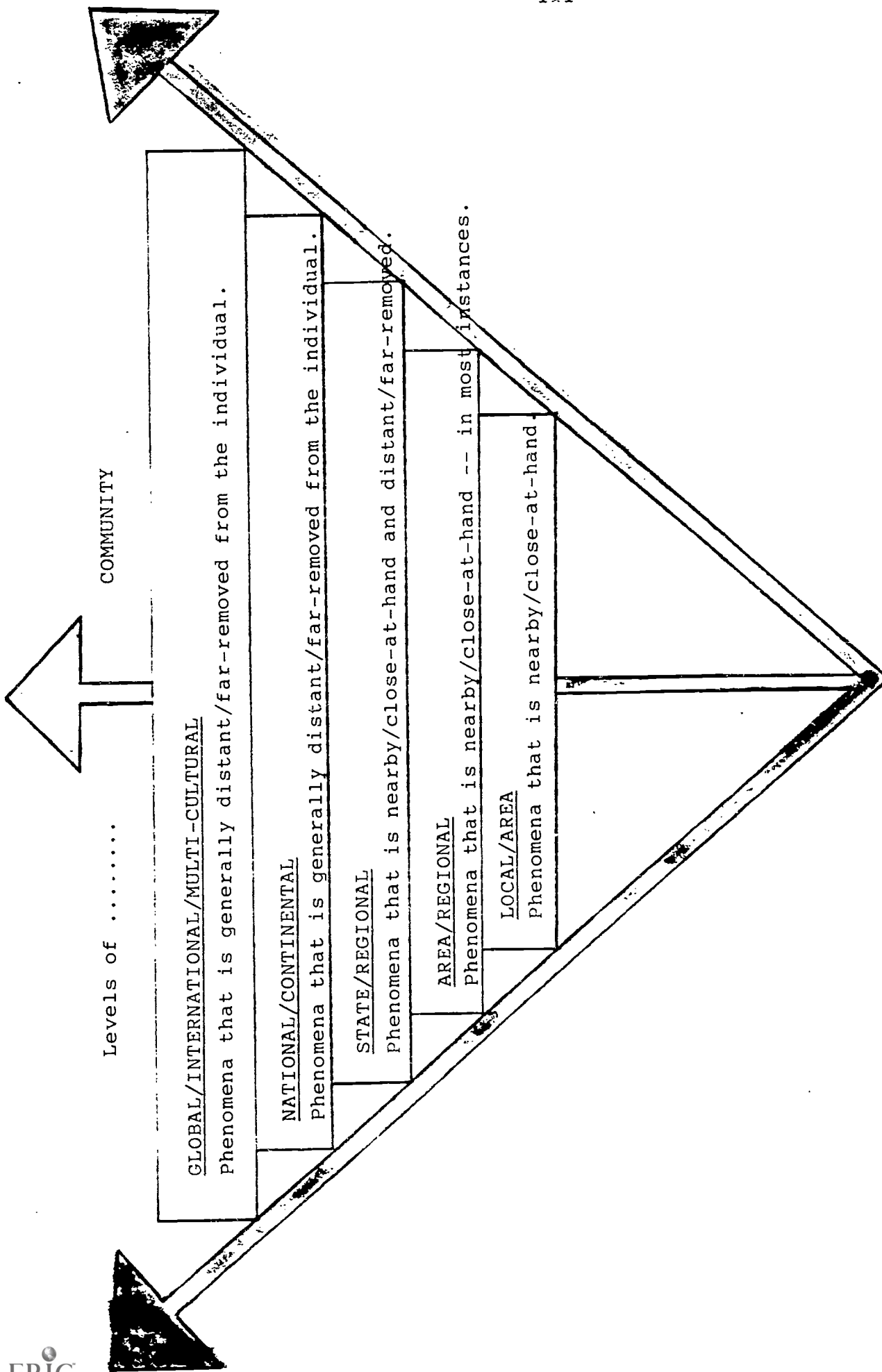
- field testing OUR COMMON HOME: EARTH
instructional units in K-12 classrooms;

- application of the Proactive Action Model
Cross-Culture Matrix to the study of
diverse social groups.

NGO member of the Environment Liaison Centre, Nairobi KENYA.

THE TRIAD OF HUMAN EXISTENCE





As an individual matures and accumulates varied experiences (real and vicarious) into a field of reference, one's sense of COMMUNITY expands to include phenomena that is nearby/close-at-hand and distant/far-removed and found within the context of natural/social environments.

CITIZENSHIP AND 21ST CENTURY COMMUNITIES

As individuals, and as members of social groups, we function simultaneously within the context of several related, diverse real life worlds. Some of these 'worlds' are nearby/close-to-home and are readily perceived and understood to be important in our daily lives because of our continuous interaction with them. Other 'worlds' are distant/far-removed from where we are, and because we do not interact with them directly and continuously, we do not perceive their existence and/or impact upon our lives!

Efforts must be made, within the context of social studies curricula, to help children and youth perceive and interact with distant phenomena (real or simulated interaction) so that they begin to understand the complexity and importance of the total global lifespace environment upon them -- singularly and collectively.

LEVELS OF CITIZENSHIP IN THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY

Each of us is a citizen of family, neighborhood, community, regional, state, national, and an international collection of diverse social/culture groups.

In order to successfully assume the mantle of citizenship responsibility at each level, individuals must demonstrate an understanding of:

- 1) contemporary conflicts, issues, problems
and/or situations that have a direct impact
upon our daily lives - fortunes - futures.
- 2) personalities and groups/organizations that
impact our lives and effect our well-being.

- 3) cultural, economic, political, and social conditions that influence the quality of life.
- 4) historical events, movements, and courses-of-action that impact contemporary life.
- 5) diverse points-of-view, opinions, and/or position statements regarding conflicts, issues, problems, and/or situations.

Individuals should be proficient in the ability to:

- 1) discern relevant conflicts, issues, problems, and/or situations that impact daily life.
- 2) identify and locate sources of pertinent information -- to enhance one's perceptions concerning relevant conditions as stated in (1).
- 3) collect and analyze data.
- 4) evaluate the many facets of conflicts, issues, problems, and/or situations.
- 5) form an opinion and take a public stand.

- 6) identify alternative courses-of-action that could be taken in order to resolve conflicts, clarify issues, solve problems, and/or better understand situations.
- 7) ponder and evaluate the possible consequences of each alternative course-of-action.
- 8) select the most-appropriate course-of-action and design an implementation strategy.
- 9) act overtly in a proactive manner.
- 10) muster support among the diverse community-based POPULATIONS and SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS.

According to Clark, Newmann, and Rutter, civic participation depends, in part, on the development of a sense of public good. Citizens should be able to build consensus and compromise through involvement in public discourse, and the ability to see public issues from alternative perspectives.

Community service programs which further the aims of social studies would involve not only participation, but also would provide mechanisms through which students would reflect upon related public issues and develop the capacity of perspective

taking.

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) promotes the notion that public service programs could include:

- 1) the service (provided by students) provides opportunities for them to nurture a sense of commitment and caring for others.
- 2) the service would directly involve students with a critical social problem or in some way contribute to the common good.
- 3) involves students in decision-making, problem-solving, political participation and/or consensus building.
- 4) provides opportunities for reflection and thoughtful analysis -- such reflective seminars should focus on social issues, social responsibility, questions of the common good. Students would be given opportunities to articulate values and reason about value conflicts.
- 5) involve adults and students working together.

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YOUTH-ORIENTED ACTIVITIES

A diversity of approaches and methods can be used in the classroom and at field-based sites (that most-closely replicate both nearby/close-to-home and distant/far-removed real life world phenomena) to affect attitudinal, behavioral, intellectual, perceptual and citizenship skills development of students.

- 1) Field trips into the community environment to observe and interact with phenomena related to perceived conflicts, issues, problems, and/or situations as they pertain to natural/social settings.
- 2) Guest speakers discuss perceived conflicts, issues, problems, and/or situations as they pertain to the personal lives of students -- as well as to the well-being of the community-at-large.
- 3) Field-based resource people introduce students to phenomena related to their investigations concerning selected conflicts, issues, problems, and/or situations.
- 4) School- and field-based research to collect data relevant to the study of perceived conflicts, issues, problems, and/or situations.
- 5) Design, develop, and execute community service projects which will result in conflict resolution,

issues clarification, problem solving,
and/or a better understanding of selected
situations -- as they exist within the
context of real world environments;
natural and social.

- 6) Analysis of data pertinent to perceived
conflicts, issues, problems, and/or
situations that has been gleaned from
a variety of primary/secondary sources
as well as from social agencies and
organizations.
- 7) Development of proactive strategies to
remedy situations that exist within the
context of diverse 'communities'.
Proposals are presented to the appropriate
agencies/organizations within the community
lifespace environment.
- 8) Organization of community resources to
achieve the goals and objectives of the
proactive strategies mentioned in Item 7.
- 9) Organization of public support campaigns
to focus citizen attention on selected
conflicts, issues, problems, and/or
situations that effect their lives and
fortunes.

- 10) Write Letters-to-the-Editor -- again to focus citizen attention on critical conflicts, issues, problems, and/or situations that have immediate and long-range effect upon the community and its inhabitants.
- 11) Create a classroom newsletter that will be distributed throughout the school, to parents, and to selected community agencies/organizations.
- 12) KIDS-SPOT -- a weekly, fifteen minute radio/television program designed to inform the listening public about school/community activities.
- 13) KIDS-SPOT -- a weekly column in the local newspaper designed to inform the reading public about school/community activities.



The ECO/SOCIAL Studies approach focuses attention not only on the diverse character of natural and social (human-made) environments, worldwide, but also on the day-to-day interaction and interdependence between these types of environments.

STUDENT ENVIRONMENT AWARENESS (SEA) introduces students to the nature and character of lifespace environments that are nearby/close-at-hand. These environments are experienced, directly, through the senses and are perceived to be concrete and relevant to daily life. Environmental phenomena include people, places, things, locations and sites, natural processes, inventions, institutions, and artifacts. An emphasis is placed on field-based studies/learning involving nature walks, field trips, and anthropological digs.

MAN AND HIS ENVIRONMENT (ME) program activities enable students to interact with the total lifespace environment not only in the classroom and at selected/related field-based sites but also through hiking daytrips, canoe trips, and overnight camping excursions. An emphasis is placed on active student participation in awareness/exposure activities that challenge abilities and enhance positive SELF concepts and esteem.

PEOPLE IN THEIR ENVIRONMENTS (PIE) involves students in the study of selected human groups -- past and present, worldwide, and focuses attention on the character/nature and interaction between natural/social environments. Students work in small inquiry teams and role play researching social scientists.

HUMANS/ENVIRONMENT LEARNING PROGRAM (H/ELP) provides students the opportunity to investigate conflicts, issues, problems, and/or situations that interest them. The total lifespace environment of the community, area/region, state, nation, and global village becomes a learning laboratory as phenomena is studied. Students are encouraged to be proactive; that is, to inquire, to discover, to ponder, to make decisions, and to act in constructive ways so as to resolve conflicts, to clarify issues, to solve problems, and/or to better understand situations.

A Decade of Lifespace Awareness: 1981 - 1991

STUDENT ENVIRONMENT AWARENESS (SEA)

This K-12 program can be integrated into any existing subject matter curriculum, and can be used to form the basis for interdisciplinary studies regarding the natural and social character of the local community/region.

An emphasis is placed on formally introducing students to the lifespace within which they exist and function. It should never be assumed that just because an individual lives in a given setting that he/she is totally knowledgeable about the surroundings. Thus, children and youth must be systematically introduced (and learn about) the things that exist about them.

Depending upon age/grade, students can be directly involved in a variety of planned activities that will enhance their awareness and understanding about the natural environment(s) and ecosystems that are an integral part of the community lifespace.

An ideal SEA program would 1) develop student awareness of the character/nature of the total lifespace environment of the local community, 2) provide opportunities for students to gain direct access to field-based sites within the context of the local community, 3) enable students to develop and apply necessary knowledge/skills related to citizenship training and responsible community-oriented behavior, 4) give students opportunities to function within natural environments on canoe trips, daytrip hikes into wilderness areas, and overnight camping trips, and 5) enable students to interact with diverse

resources in the classroom and at field-based locations. The SEA program attempts to incorporate community resources into the instructional process, to utilize community resource people as field-based instructors, to utilize community locations/sites and places as field-based classrooms, to make all of learning relevant to the real world of student's everyday lives, and to expand the walls of the classroom to encompass the total lifespace environment.

MAN AND HIS ENVIRONMENT (ME)

The ME emphasis is on direct student interaction with natural environments and related phenomena.

An ideal ME program might be geared to 8th - 12th grade students -- allowing them to not only realize the educational value of discovering in the wild -- but how to recreate in the wild and enjoy the experience.

An emphasis is placed on survival skills training and application. Student clubs can be organized (such as the ECONAUTS), extra-curricular activities can be planned at school, and weekend outing clubs can be formed -- with community/teacher volunteers to supervise activities.

Students can be taken on daytrip hiking excursions, on canoe trips, on skiing expeditions, on overnight camping trips, and to summer survival skills training camps.

Direct interaction with natural environments develops within students an understanding of the importance of these environments to maintaining a quality lifespace, and a sense of stewardship.

PEOPLE IN THEIR ENVIRONMENTS (PIE)

In this multi-grade approach, students develop a sense of relationship with natural/social environments and related phenomena, and comprehend the interrelationships between natural and social environments -- locally, regionally, state-wide, nationally, and throughout the global community.

In a study of economics and natural resources -- within the local community, students realize that if the economy of the community is to be maintained, and possibly improved, then humans must be concerned for the plight of nature -- and must whatever is necessary to conserve and manage both finite and renewable resources.

On a global scale, students investigate human adaptation -- and how natural environments effect cultures and human lifestyles. At the same time, students research technological development -- and how certain human groups are able to alter nature to suit personal tastes.

PIE concentrates student attention on concepts/themes such as conservation, resources management, stewardship, land use management, reforestation, and wildlife management.

Working in small inquiry teams, students investigate diverse topics and identify school-based and community-based resources that will enhance their discovery process.

HUMANS/ENVIRONMENT LEARNING PROGRAM (H/ELP)

Culture literacy among students is the overriding goal of the H/ELP program.

An emphasis is placed on students becoming proactive action learners -- and committed to community service projects that will, in some way(s), enhance the quality of life and/or resolve conflicts - clarify issues - solve problems - remedy situations that impact the daily lives of community dwellers.

At Grades 9-12, an emphasis is placed on studying the several environments that exist beyond the local community/region. The several inquiry teams investigate diverse areas of the global community -- and the human groups that inhabit them.

Using the CROSS-CULTURE matrix, students visually compare and contrast culture traits such as food/clothing/shelter, ceremonies, taboos, industrial development, tools/weapons, structure and function(s) of government, and social roles/status.

Natural/social environments interrelationships and interdependence are important concepts that students are exposed to -- and learn more about through direct and vicarious studies.

Whenever possible, the local/area environments are used to replicate settings and cultures distant/far-removed from the students. By going into these true-to-diverse natural/social settings (on a global scale), students begin to develop an understanding of phenomena that otherwise they would never experience because of proximity to them.

At other times, when diverse global settings cannot be replicated in the community/area, audiovisual materials can be used to vicariously expose students to phenomena.

Films, filmstrips, slides, still photographs, and video tapes can be used to introduce students to peoples and places that they would otherwise never see or experience. Authentic qualities to audiovisual presentations such as color, sights, and sounds add realism to classroom presentations.

As with field-based experiences, audiovisual presentations can be used to 1) introduce a lesson/unit, 2) enhance student learning during the course of lesson/unit development, and 3) as a culminating activity/experience upon completion of a lesson/unit.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Direct student involvement in programs such as SEA and ME can provide the basis for family group follow-up on weekends and at vacation time.

Within the family group, a focus can be placed on recreation, and the wise use of natural/social environment phenomena.

Having received training as well as life survival skills development through SEA and other programs, students can 'teach' other members of the family to appreciate and utilize natural/social phenomena that exists within the context of the community.

Parent volunteers can accompany student groups on daytrips, nature walks, hikes, canoe trips, and overnight camping trips. In this process, parents will receive skills development training along with students. Thus, they will be in a position to encourage family members to recreate. They can also train family members to get involved with environmental phenomena.

Special programs can be designed for/offered to parents ONLY! The training and skills development activities offered to parents will closely resemble the opportunities made available to students through SEA, ME, and other ECO/SOCIAL Studies-oriented programs.

Parents can be valuable community resources to be incorporated within the several ECO/SOCIAL Studies-oriented skills/process development programs (K-12). These resource people can serve as guest speakers, field-site chaperones/guides, and as inquiry team consultants/advisors.

These several strategies can be incorporated into PARENTS-IN-

TRAINING programs that enable parents to interact with their sons/daughters and other children in the classroom, at field-based sites, and on skills development/application excursions.

As a result of such training, everyone in the community; children/youth and adults alike, begins to realize the importance of quality lifespace environments, and to identify ways by which they can enjoy natural/social phenomena -- as part of their individual/collective lifestyles.

COMMENTS

The ECO/SOCIAL Studies approach to instruction/program development provides a structure for the blending of science and social studies instruction/activities and experiences.

Community-based resources (people) can be used as field-based teachers -- to supplement the number/expertise of the professional teaching staff in the school, and locations/sites can be used as field-based classrooms and learning labs. Relics and other phenomena found at these locations/sites can become instructional materials -- to supplement and enhance those materials used in the classroom.

Field-based activities can be used 1) to introduce a unit theme or topic, 2) to develop student awareness and understanding during the course of unit theme/topic development, and/or 3) as an end-of-unit activity that allows students to apply acquired knowledge and skills in real life settings of a natural/social nature.

No school can, nor should it try to, replicate the real life world of children/youth that surrounds that institution! Rather than closing the doors to the outside world of students -- schools must consider making that which takes place within the classroom a part of the daily life of all children -- regardless of age, ability, culture, or socio-economic status.

THE FOLLOWING ESSAY IS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW CLASSROOM
ACTIVITIES/EXPERIENCES CAN BE RELATED TO THE REAL
LIFE WORLD OF CHILDREN/YOUTH USING THE ECO/SOCIAL
STUDIES MODEL.

Putting the 'Science' in Social Science into the Social Studies Curriculum of Middle School Education

As we approach the 21st Century with eager anticipation and hope of better things ahead -- for ourselves, our nation, and our world, we sense a need to prepare students to function within the context of a global society. That society will demand that they not only possess knowledge but be skilled in processing and using data in proactive ways so as to resolve conflicts, clarify issues, solve problems, and better comprehend situations of a personal and/or social nature.

At this juncture, a question must be posed: Is the mission of schooling (formal education through the several grades) to shield and protect children and youth from the real world(s) about them or should the schools introduce students to those worlds, and provide them with the knowledge and skills necessary so that they might successfully function within these environments -- today and all of their tomorrows?

According to the National Council for the Social Studies (1981), by the year 2001 the day-to-day lives of average citizens, as well as the destinies of nations, will be influenced by growing international, cross-cultural links.

Domestic and international issues will demand that citizens think critically and objectively, ponder alternatives, make rational decisions, and act responsibly when solving matters of global concern and magnitude. Individuals will be required to understand and interact with cultures, languages, lifestyles, and value systems unlike their own.

Students can be introduced to the processes of critical thinking, decision making, and problem solving skills development using the Proactive Action Model (see diagram 1) in social studies classes at grades seven and eight. The PAM schema can be equally effective when applied to classroom-centered or field-based inquiry situations.

Students can be challenged, in a variety of ways, to function as researching social scientists in order to:

1. perceive conflicts, issues, problems, and/or situations;
2. identify diverse primary and secondary sources of information;
3. collect, evaluate, and organize relevant data;
4. synthesize data into a meaningful whole for the purpose of refining perceptions;
5. analyze data and brainstorm possible alternative courses-of-action that could be taken in order to resolve conflicts, clarify issues, or solve problems;
6. ponder the possible consequences and effects of each alternative course-of-action;
7. evaluate each alternative and select that course-of-action deemed most appropriate for conflict resolution, issues clarification, or problem solving;
8. design a strategy to implement the chosen course-of-action in real life and/or real-to-life (simulated) situations;
9. monitor the implementation and operation of the designed strategy process;
10. collect and analyze newly generated data;
11. evaluate the effect(s) of the implementation strategy;

12. apply newly generated data to the ongoing PAM skills development process to affect perception(s), thought process(es), and action(s) regarding future conflicts, issues, problems, and/or situations.

Concepts and Themes: The Environment

The increasing impact of human activity and numbers upon Earth's ecosystem and its carrying capacity will dramatically effect the character of natural and social environments in which today's children and youth will function as citizens of the 21st Century.

Student inquiry into conflicts, issues, problems, and/or situations as related to local, regional, state, national, or global environments can be organized around a series of concepts or themes, e.g., air/noise/sight/sound pollution, conservation and stewardship, exploitation/utilization of natural and human resources, global warming and the greenhouse effect, and human population growth and distribution.

In order to bridge, in the minds of students, those perceptual gaps between natural/social environment phenomena that are nearby/close-at-hand and those phenomena that are distant/far-removed (e.g., people, places, things, processes, and events), inquiry activities and experiences should initially focus attention on local community phenomena that can be experienced directly.

For example, using PAM process steps 1-8 to investigate land use practices in the local community/surrounding region, students would:

1. identify land use practices as the topic of study;

2. identify sources of information, e.g., print/non-print materials, community resource people, and locations/sites within the context of the community environment;
3. research print/non-print materials, contact resource people, and make the necessary arrangements to visit locations/sites;
3. collect relevant data from print/non-print sources, interact with community resource people in classrooms and at resource sites, and take field trips into the community environment to observe examples of land use/misuse (e.g., motion pictures, still pictures, video tapes);
4. analyze compiled data and organize it into a meaningful pattern so that methods and techniques of land use/misuse in the local community are discernible;
5. compile and organize data regarding methods and techniques
& of land use in other locales that can be applied in the
6. local community/region;
7. conduct a community-wide campaign to inform the general public, special interests, and elected officials about current land use/misuse policies and practices in the local community/region;
8. propose a preferred land use plan/policy for the local community/region to elected officials;
8. attend public hearings as observers of fact-finding and decision making processes by elected officials.

Having progressed to this point in the PAM process, students await the action(s) of community officials. If-and-when a land

use policy is enacted and enforced, students will proceed to steps 9-12 of the skills development sequence. For example:

9. confer with elected officials, private/corporate land owners, representatives of conservation/special interest groups, and business/industrial leaders to obtain opinions and reactions to the land use policy;
9. field trips to community sites to observe land use policy implementation;
9. document policy implementation over an extended period of time;
10. confer with elected officials, private/corporate land owners, representatives of conservation/special interest groups, and business/industrial leaders to obtain opinions and reactions to the effects of the land use policy;
10. field trips to community sites previously visited to observe the immediate effects of the enacted land use policy on natural/social environments (e.g., motion pictures, still pictures, and video tapes);
10. field trips to community sites previously visited to discuss the long range effects of the enacted land use policy on natural/social environments with selected community resource people;
11. analyze data obtained from interviews and field trip observations and develop reports regarding the immediate and anticipated long-range effects of the land use policy;
11. present reports to the student body of the school, to parent-teacher groups, to the community-at-large via public meetings and through the mass media (e.g., newspapers, radio, and television);

12. apply the strategy that was designed to affect the creation of a land use policy to other perceived problems in the local community/region (e.g., air/noise/sight/water pollution, shelters for the homeless and needy, day care centers for the children of working mothers, and community recreation facilities).

As a result of these direct encounters and experiences with close-at-hand phenomena, students possess a perceptual framework upon which they can build an understanding of similar phenomena of a far-distant nature.

Learning Environments

Students can, and should, be involved in a variety of real life and real-to-life experiences that will effect their awareness, enhance their perceptions, clarify their understandings, enrich their comprehension, and nurture critical skills development.

Initially, students are engaged in fact-finding and skills development activities designed and administered by teachers. In DIRECTED LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS (DLEs) students obtain essential concepts, knowledge, skills, and training necessary for self-directed study experiences that will be provided within the context of ALTERNATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS (ALEs). For example, in preparing to use the PAM process, students are introduced to data collection skills and provided opportunities to apply them to classroom and library-based activities.

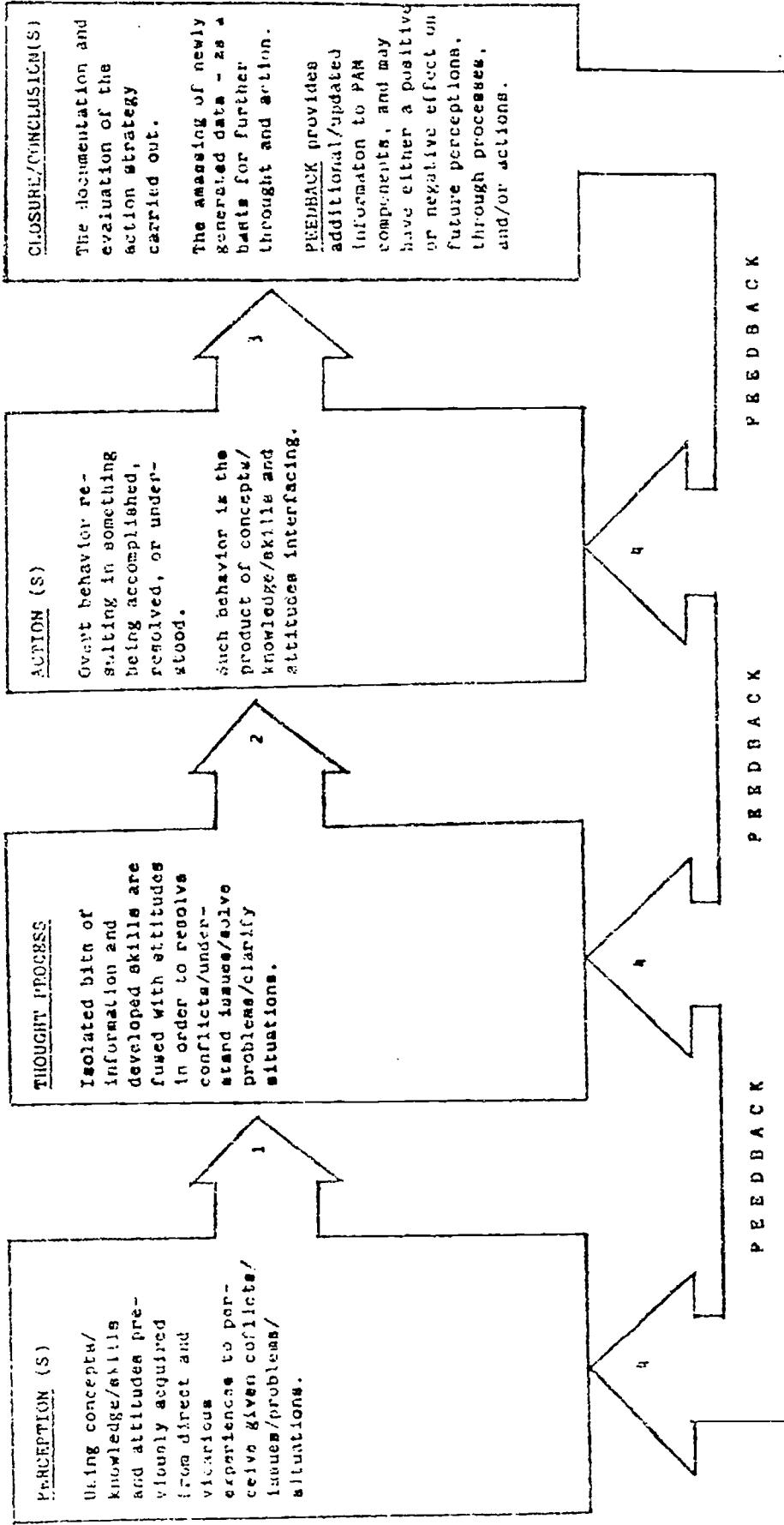
ALEs are designed by teachers and instructional support service specialists to provide students with multiple learning situations from which each will select the alternative that best meets

personal abilities, interests, and needs. The several ALE learning experiences are designed so that each-and-every one adheres to clearly defined goals and objectives -- assuring that all students will acquire the concepts/knowledge/skills deemed essential so that they might move on to other, more complicated tasks. For example, while each of the several inquiry teams selects an environment-related topic to research, one particular team focuses its attention on land use/misuse in the local community/region and applies acquired data collection skills to this topic.

In SIMULATED EXPERIENCE ENVIRONMENTS (SEEs) students are provided opportunities to vicariously interact with selected conflicts, issues, problems, and/or situations of a real world nature that would otherwise not be available to them to experience on a direct, personal interaction basis. Activities adhere to the PAM process, and students role play individuals and groups involved in hypothetical conflicts, issues, and problem situations. For example, the inquiry team that is researching land use/misuse explore conflicts, issues, and problems related to this topic that exist, in fact, in far-removed locations. Having collected data regarding these real life situations, students create scenarios and role play individuals/groups who are directly involved with/affected by these situations, by efforts to resolve crises, and by the results of actions taken.

PERCEPTION ENRICHMENT ENVIRONMENTS (PEEs) are classroom-centered and/or field-based situations that enable students to hone acquired skills and to enhance their understanding(s) of conflicts, issues, and/or problems previously studied within the context of real life (e.g., conversations with community resource

people, field trips to community-based sites, field studies for purposes of collecting relevant data) and real-to-life experiences (e.g., computer simulations, role playing, and multimedia presentations). PEEs represent the culminating experience phase of the four stage concepts/knowledge/skills development process that is the Learning Environments schema. For example, students investigating land use/misuse in the local community/region organize a community awareness campaign and design activities to focus public attention on the need for land use management and natural/social environment protection.



PRODUCTIVE ACTION MODEL (PAM) FOR CRITICAL THINKING/Problem Solving
EXPERIENCE Development among High Schoolers in Social Studies
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